

NHS Virtual Wards Aim to Reduce Waiting Lists



More than 100,000 patients have been treated in NHS virtual wards in the recent year. Virtual wards allow patients to receive hospital-level care safely at home and in familiar surroundings.

The virtual wards are also known as 'Hospital at Home' models; they help reduce avoidable admissions by providing hospital-level care at patient homes. The aim of this is to speed up patient recovery while freeing up hospital beds for patients.

Patients are reviewed daily by the clinical team and cared for by a multi-skilled team who provide a range of tests and treatments. It may involve a home visit or by using video activity.

These innovative virtual wards are part of the NHS's recovery plan for urgent and emergency care with the goal of treating up to 50,000 patients a month. Ultimately its aim is to reduce NHS pressure, reduce waiting times, expand frailty services and support urgent community response teams.

NHS national medical director, Professor Sir Stephen Powis, said, "With up to a fifth of emergency hospital admissions estimated to be avoided through better supporting vulnerable patients at home and in the community, these world leading programmes are making a real difference not just to the people they directly benefit but also in reducing pressure on wider services".

Observations are taken every six hours to identify any issue and ECGs are being carried out at the patient's home. Patients can be certain they will receive an immediate response, just like being on a ward. For instance, should a patient feel unwell, an alert is immediately sent to a clinician, reducing the chance of emergency re-admission.

The idea of a virtual ward is comforting to patients and beneficial to them – rather than going into hospital, they can stay in the comfort of their own space, and receive excellent care.

Source: [NHS](#)

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